

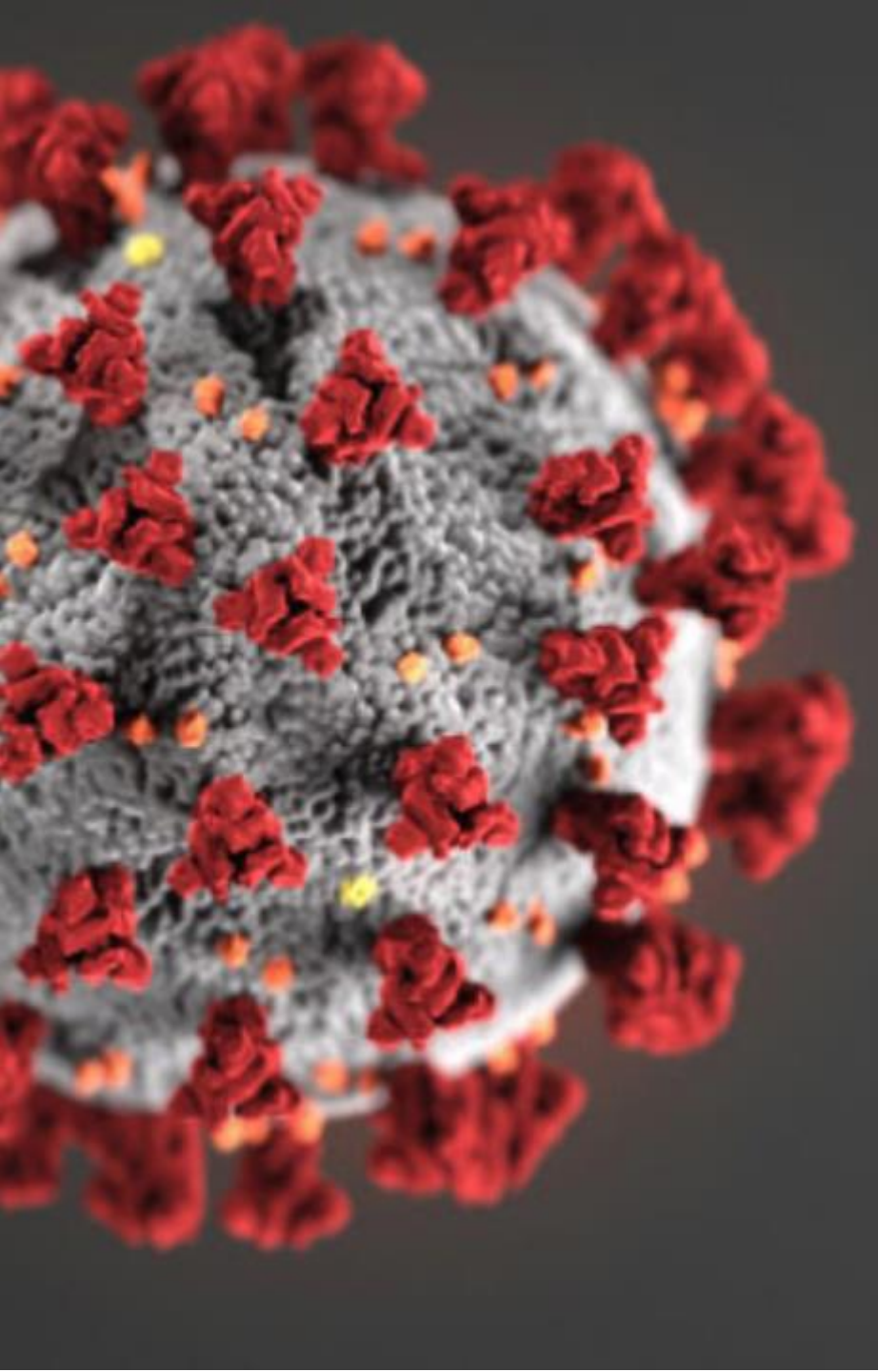
# COVID-19 Health Update & Employer Workforce Resources

Agency of Commerce and Community Development,  
Department of Health & Department of Labor



# AGENDA

- **Department of Health: COVID-19 Update**  
*Department of Health's Epidemiology Team*
- **Department of Labor: Workforce Shortage and Hiring Resources for Employers**  
*Department of Labor Workforce Coordinator, Cindy Robillard*
- **Agency of Commerce: Relocation and Recruitment Incentives**  
*Department of Economic Development Commissioner, Joan Goldstein*



# **COVID-19 in Workplaces**

**Debbie Sanguinetti & Julia Pringle**  
**Vermont Department of Health**

ACCD Webinar  
September 1, 2021

# Where are we now?



85.2% of Vermonters  
aged 12+ have  
started vaccination

# Refer to guidance from your regulatory authorities

STATE OF VERMONT

## Department of Labor

SEARCH

[FIND A JOB - Job Search Assistance](#)

[GET TALENT - Employer Recruitment Assistance](#)

[UI Updates \[Newsfeed\] - CLICK HERE](#)

Details on end of federal UI benefits (ending 9/4)

COVID-19

Department Resources

## COVID-19 UPDATES



# Visit [healthvermont.gov](https://healthvermont.gov) for COVID-19 case response tools

	PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS
	SYMPTOMS & SICKNESS
	TESTING
	TRAVEL
	VACCINE
	HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS
	YOUR COMMUNITY
	RESOURCES
	FAQS
	CONTACT: COVID-19 Vaccine registration:

Vermont Department of Health

## BUSINESSES & EMPLOYEES



Vermont businesses! Want to host a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for your staff or local community? [Contact the state!](#)

As of June 14, there are no COVID-19 restrictions or requirements for businesses to follow. **Businesses can make their own decisions about whether to require employees or customers to wear masks or be vaccinated.** Businesses can refer to the Vermont Occupational and Safety and Health Administration's (VOSHA) for [recommendations related to COVID-19](#).

Vermont's high vaccination rates mean the vast majority of Vermonters are protected from the virus and keep the virus from spreading to others. With high vaccination rates and low number of COVID-19 cases, it's safe for most Vermonters to return to the activities they did before the pandemic.

[Learn more about the steps anyone can take to prevent COVID-19](#) ➔

## INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS

The Health Department is still doing contact tracing when someone tests positive for COVID-19. If someone was exposed to COVID-19 at your business, we will contact you. Vermont businesses can help by working with us to keep their employees and customers safe.

# On September 7, we are asking workplaces to notify close contacts about exposures

	PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS
	SYMPTOMS & SICKNESS
	TESTING
	TRAVEL
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# UPDATES COMING SEPTEMBER 7th

# Objectives

Steps in COVID-19 case response

Contact tracing:

- Close contact definition

- Guidance for close contacts

Communication

Questions



# **Step 1: Confirm the exposure**

# The health department will alert you if someone attended your facility while infectious



# The health department will verify the case was in the facility while infectious before alerting you



Verify the person tested positive



Verify when the infectious period began



Confirm the facility exposure occurred during the infectious period

# The health department will NOT reach out if the case did not expose the facility



Verify the person tested positive



Verify when the infectious period began



Confirm the facility exposure occurred during the infectious period

# Staff, patients, or patrons might tell you they tested positive





# When workplaces learn first, verify the exposure was during the infectious period before proceeding



Verify the person tested positive



Verify when the infectious period began



Confirm the facility exposure occurred during the infectious period

**If symptoms are present, the infectious period began two days before symptoms started and continues until isolation ends**



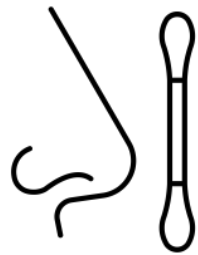
Infectious Period

Day -2: Start  
infectious period

Day 0:  
Symptom onset

Day 11:  
Isolation ends

**If symptoms aren't present, the infectious period began two days before the test was collected**



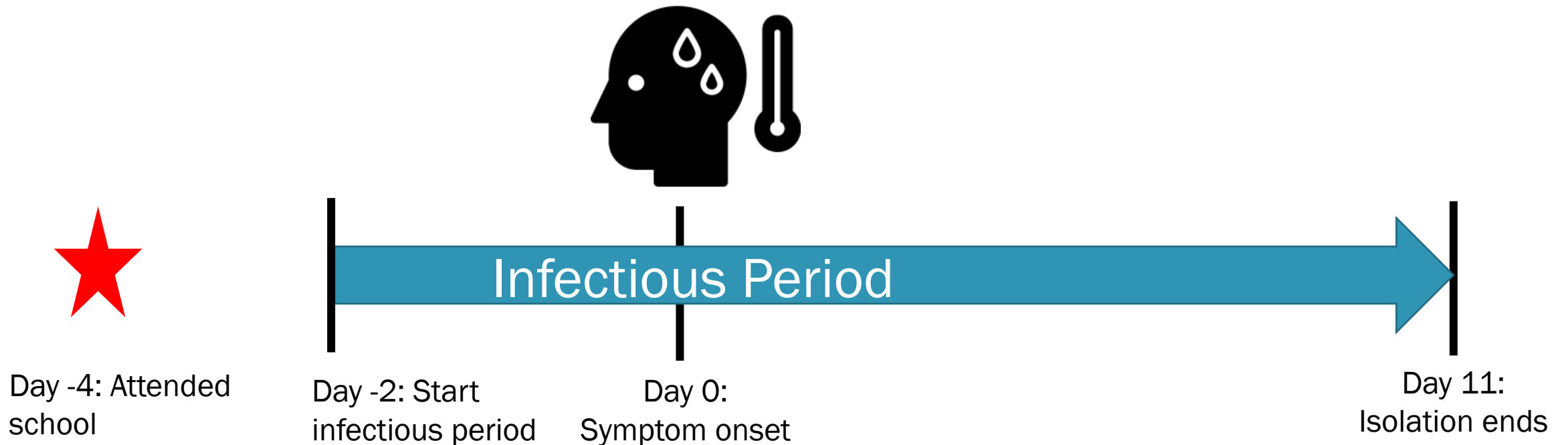
**Infectious Period**

Day -2: Start  
infectious period

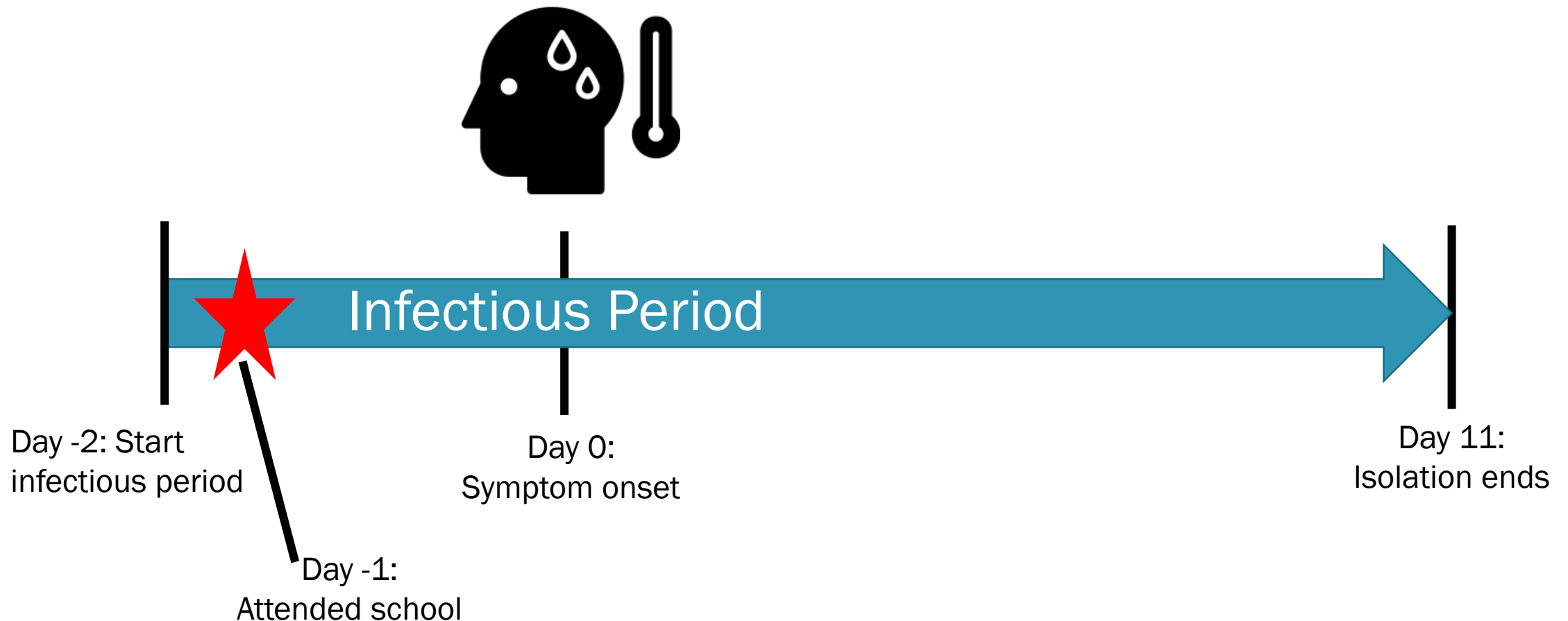
Day 0:  
Test collection

Day 11:  
Isolation ends

**If an exposure occurred outside of the infectious period, NO RESPONSE is needed**



**If an exposure to school occurred during the infectious period,  
contact tracing is needed**







## **Step 2: Take immediate steps to prevent transmission**

# Ensure positive people are isolated

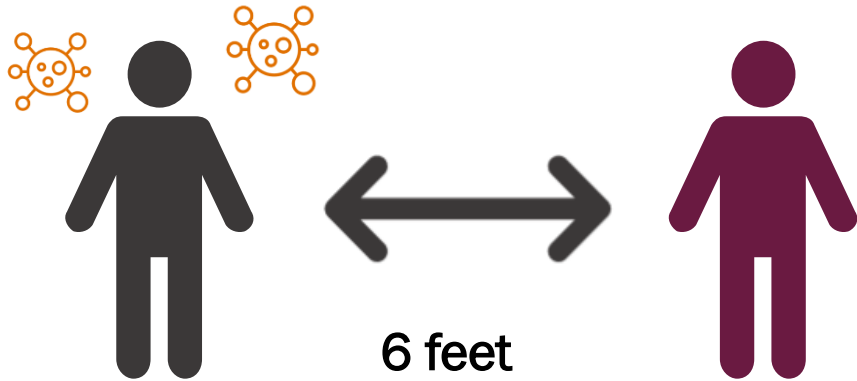
For residential facilities, isolate positive people in individual rooms away from others

Send positive people home

Ensure positive people are wearing a mask and isolated from others as much as possible until they can safely exit the building

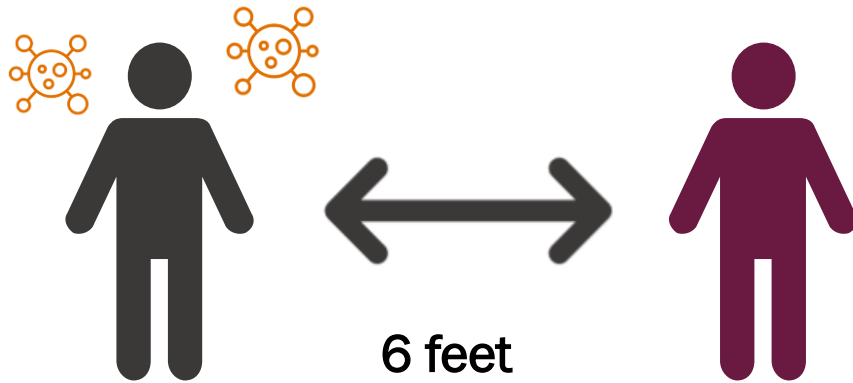
## **Step 3: Contact tracing**

**Close contacts** are people who were within 6 feet of an infectious person for  $\geq 15$  cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period



$\geq 15$  cumulative minutes in  
24 hours

# Mask wearing is not factored into **close contact** determination



6 feet

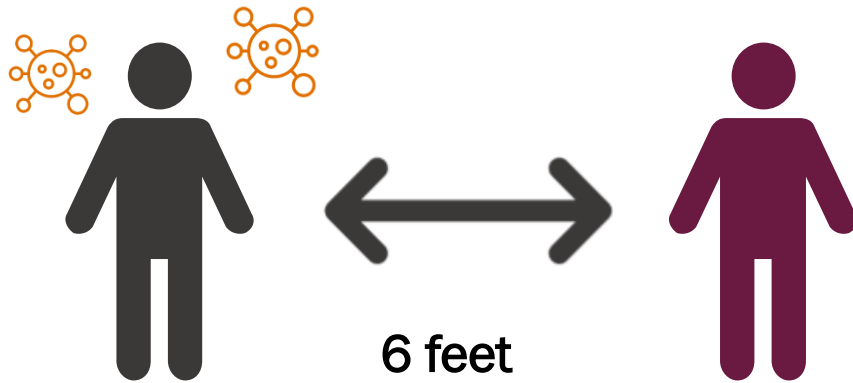


≥15 cumulative minutes in  
24 hours





# Being outside is not factored into **close contact** determination



6 feet



≥15 cumulative minutes in  
24 hours



# Document close contacts in a Line List

# Determine vaccination status, if possible

Clipboard		Font		Alignment	
A	B	Q	R	S	
Free Text		Drop Down	Date	Drop Down	
First name	Last name	Fully Vaccinated (Yes/No/Unk)	Date of Last Vaccine Dose	Lives on or off Campus? (if applicable)	La

If a person does not want to share their vaccination status, consider them to be unvaccinated

# Contact the health department

802-863-7240 x 8 during 7:45am–4:30pm Monday–Friday

Any time: email the information below to [Covid19.workplacecontacttracing@vermont.gov](mailto:Covid19.workplacecontacttracing@vermont.gov)

- Date of report
- Facility name & location
- Facility point of contact (name, position, phone number, email)

# Over secure email, the health department will request additional information

- Name & DOB of positive individual
- Role in facility
- Date of COVID test
- Type of test (Antigen, PCR, Home Test)
- Where was the person tested, if known?
- Symptoms of positive individual
- Symptom onset date
- Dates in the facility while infectious
- Potential areas of exposure
- Has the facility started contact tracing based on this exposure?



**Send the line list to**  
**[Covid19.workplacecontacttracing@vermont.gov](mailto:Covid19.workplacecontacttracing@vermont.gov)**

[illegible]

[Covid19.workplacecontacttracing@vermont.gov](mailto:Covid19.workplacecontacttracing@vermont.gov)

## **Step 4: Exposure & Quarantine Notification**

# Share exposure letter with all close contacts

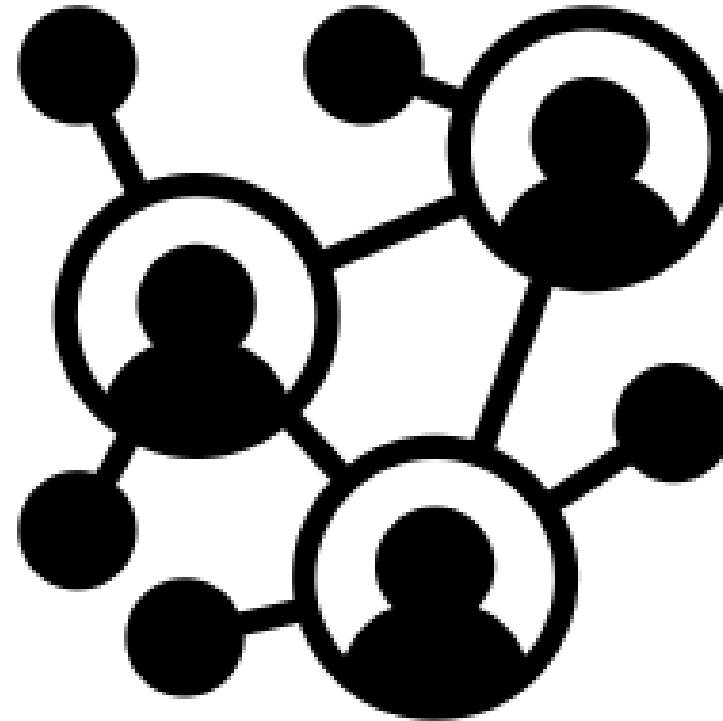
I have been directed by the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Team at the Vermont Department of Health to share the following information with you.

On [insert date], we learned about a person with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) at [insert school/facility name].

**We believe that you were in close contact with the person who has COVID-19.**

Close contact means being within six feet, or two meters, for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period while the person was infectious. A person's infectious period starts two days before any symptoms began (or for people without any symptoms, two days before the day they got tested) and continues until they are recovered.

# The health department will not facility call close contacts



# The letter encourages VACCINATED contacts to seek testing

**If you are fully vaccinated, you do not need to quarantine unless you develop symptoms.** Fully vaccinated means 14 days have passed since your final dose of vaccine. If you are fully vaccinated, consider getting tested 3-5 days after your exposure date (Day 0 is the date of your exposure). If you develop symptoms at any point, seek testing right away, and stay at home and away from others.

# Symptomatic vaccinated people should stay home from work and seek testing



# The letter recommends quarantine for UNVACCINATED contacts

**If you are not fully vaccinated, you need to stay home for 14 days. This is called quarantine. Watch for symptoms of illness during this time.**

Number of Days After Possible Exposure	What Happens?
Day 0: [Insert Date]	This is the day you were last in contact with the person with COVID-19 in the workplace.
Day 7: [Insert Date]	You have the option of getting tested on or after day 7 of your quarantine period, if you have not had any symptoms. You need to remain in quarantine until you get the test results. If the results are negative and you still don't have any symptoms, you may return to work and end quarantine. Continue monitoring for symptoms for the remainder of the <u>14 day</u> period. Learn more about getting tested in Vermont at <a href="http://www.healthvermont.gov/covid19testing">www.healthvermont.gov/covid19testing</a> .
Day 14: [Insert Date]	This is the last day of quarantine (if you were not tested on or after day 7, as described above). If you still don't have symptoms, you may return to work the next day.

# When testing to end quarantine, a PCR test (not an antigen test) should be used



[QUICK LINKS](#)

[COVID-19 VACCINE](#)

[GET HELP NOW](#)

[COVID-19 IN VERMONT](#)

[SEARCH](#)



RT @VermontDFR: *Watch for Me - Driving Tips for Vermonters* ★Yield to pedestrians at crosswalks 🚶Follow the speed limit 🚫 Don't drive impair...  
[Read More](#)



[HOME](#) / [COVID-19](#) / [TESTING](#) /

## WHERE TO GET TESTED

There are a variety of testing options available to you: pharmacies, Health Department testing sites, and your health care provider. People with or without symptoms can be tested at most testing locations. Testing is free to all, and many sites now let you [take your own sample](#) using a short swab in your nose. The [Test Site Finder below](#) can help you find other testing near you.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you can still be tested at most locations. Find out [what to do while you're waiting for COVID-19 test results](#).

## FREE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TESTING

“PCR” and “NAAT” are sometimes used interchangeably



# Report facility-sponsored testing results to the health department

All COVID test results (including positive and negative results) are required to be reported to the Health Department within 24 hours of receiving the test result, and especially the timely reporting of positive COVID test results is critical to protect public health.

- If your business/organization is conducting COVID testing through an employee health provider, reference laboratory, or similar medical facility, please work with them to ensure they are reporting results for your facility to public health.
- If your business/organization is performing COVID testing and *not* working with an employee health or similar provider, your organization will need to report these test results directly to the Health Department. The Health Department has several options for electronic result reporting, and more information is available on our website: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/disease-control/disease-reporting/lab-result-reporting>.

Please reach out to the Health Department at [AHS.VDHLabReportFormSupport@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHLabReportFormSupport@vermont.gov) with any questions about COVID test result reporting options or requirements.



## **Step 5: Communication with your community**

# Provide general updates using a template letter

## Template Letter – Confirmed COVID-19 Case in Child Care and School Age Camps/Care revised 8/25/2021

Dear families/staff/Board:

On XX date we learned about a person in our learning community with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) at [school/child care/facility name]. We recommend that you take action to help limit the spread of COVID-19, even if your child is not experiencing symptoms.

### The most important things you can do:

- Make sure your child is wearing [a mask](#) when recommended or required.
- Make sure your child is [washing their hands](#).
- Keep your child home if they are sick.
- Call your primary care provider if you or your child has [symptoms of COVID-19](#).
- Make sure that your children get vaccinated when they are eligible. [Find a location near you.](#)

# The facility can stay open with positive people and unvaccinated excluded



Positive and symptomatic people are excluded and isolating

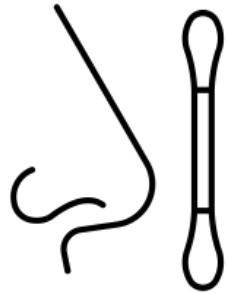


Unvaccinated close contacts are excluded and quarantining



# **When are responses subject to change?**

# Investigations based on unverified exposures are subject to change

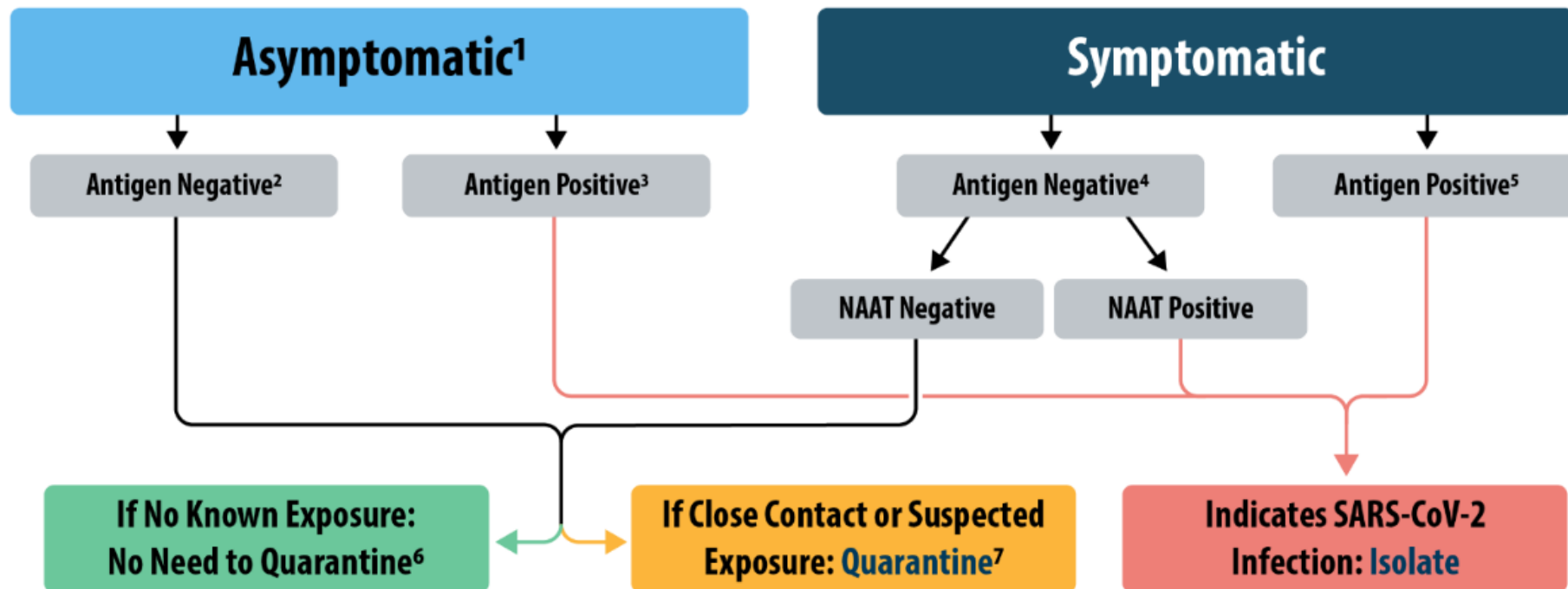


Test results have not been received

# Vermont refers to CDC guidance for antigen test interpretation

## Using Antigen Tests for SARS-CoV-2 in Community Settings

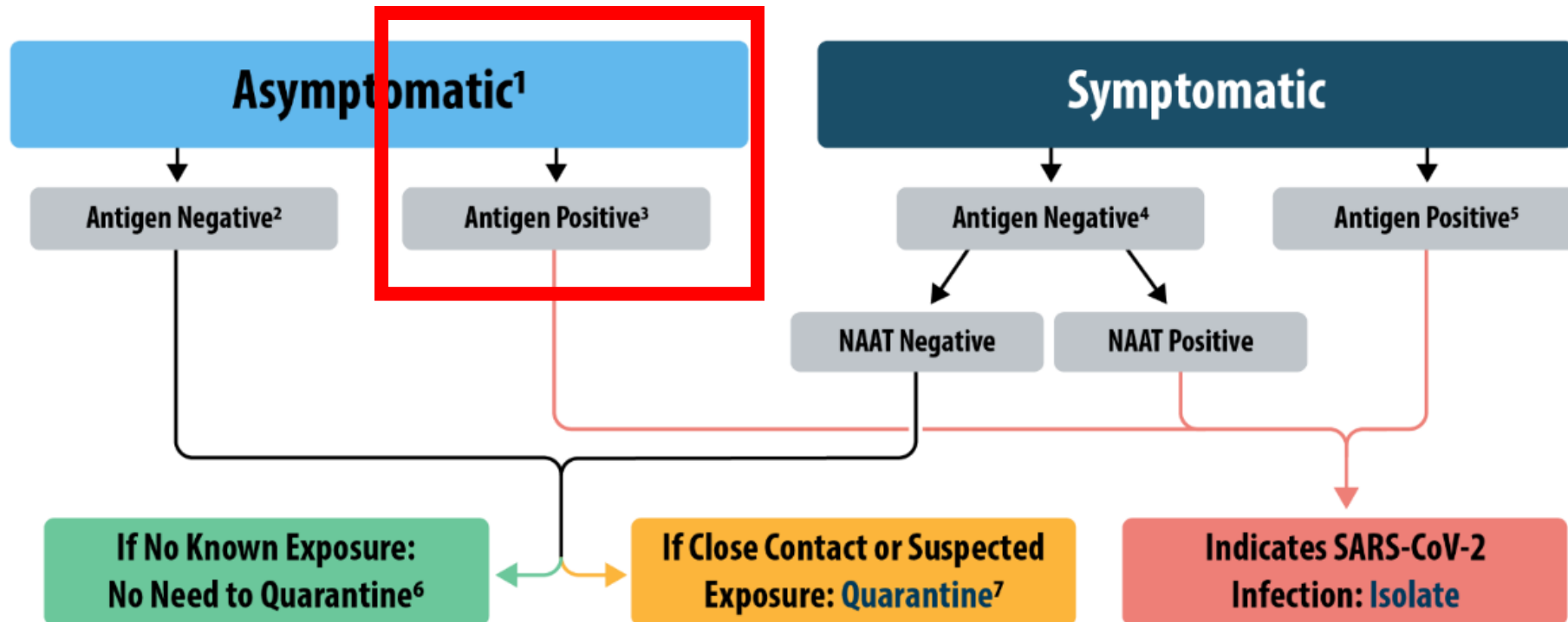
Figure 2. Antigen Test Algorithm for Community Settings



# Antigen positive & asymptomatic people who receive negative PCR results are no longer considered cases

## Using Antigen Tests for SARS-CoV-2 in Community Settings

Figure 2. Antigen Test Algorithm for Community Settings





## Provisional actions should be communicated appropriately



“We are investigating a case of COVID-19 in our facility and request that you stay home from work tomorrow while the investigation is pending.”



“You are in quarantine due to a COVID-19 exposure in the workplace.”

# The key is **PREVENTION**

Routine cleaning of work areas and surfaces

Frequent hand washing

Encourage face masks if inside in close work areas

People should stay home when they are ill



# Are you maximizing your **RECRUITMENT EFFORTS?**

## WHAT YOU MAY HAVE DONE:

- ☒ Posted jobs online through your website or other services
- ☒ Advertised in the local newspaper
- ☒ Shared your openings on social media

For more information, visit: **LABOR.VERMONT.GOV**  
or email **LABOR.VTJOBS@VERMONT.GOV**

## WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU FOR FREE

- **Post your jobs** on Vermont JobLink
- **Promote openings** to jobseekers
- **Refer applicants** and organize recruitment events

.....  
Learn more about our free resources by connecting with our Business Services team!



A proud partner of the  **americanjobcenter** network

# WORKER RELOCATION GRANT PROGRAM

*The Agency of Commerce has recruitment and relocation incentives that can help employers attract out of state talent to fill vacant positions.*

- New relocation program that offers reimbursement grants, **up to \$7,500**, to workers across the country who move to Vermont after July 1, 2021
- This new program builds upon Vermont's previous successful recruitment initiatives and aims to attract new residents to the state, grow the workforce, and support employers facing workforce challenges due to low unemployment or finding qualified candidates.
- This latest iteration of the program will be available to those who relocate to Vermont, on or after July 1, 2021, and fill a qualifying position with a Vermont employer.

**COMING IN 2022** - Remote worker grants will be available to those who relocate to Vermont, on or after February 1, 2022 and work remotely from within Vermont for an out-of-state employer.

# WORKER RELOCATION GRANT PROGRAM

## ELIGIBILITY

**Applicants must meet all criteria to be eligible.**

An eligible applicant is someone who, on or after July 1, 2021:

- Relocated to Vermont and became a full-time resident after July 1, 2021; **and**
- Became a full-time employee of a Vermont employer; **and**
- Is employed in an occupation identified by the Vermont Department of Labor in its [Short Term Occupational Projections with the Most Openings](#); **and**
- The wage for the position equals or exceeds the Vermont [livable wage](#) rate as updated 1/15/21 in accordance with 2 V.S.A. §526. Currently this is \$13.39 per/hr; **and**
- Incurred qualified relocation expenses; **and**
- Is subject to Vermont income tax; **and**
- **Is employed by an employer who attests that, after reasonable time and effort, the employer was unable to fill the employee's position from among Vermont applicants.**

# WORKER RELOCATION GRANT PROGRAM

## RESOURCES

### [Worker Relocation Grant FAQs](#)

List of frequently asked questions, as well as application readiness information for employers and applicants.

### [Short Term Occupational List \(Eligibility Requirement\)](#)

Eligible applicants must be employed in an occupation identified on the Short Term Occupational List as curated by the Department of Labor and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Agency of Commerce no longer has the authority to offer exclusions or waivers from this list.

### [Relocated Worker Grant Program Application](#)

Employers can direct applicants to the Agency of Commerce's website to complete the application. Please review all materials prior to applying to determine eligibility. Applicants will also be able to view application status on our webpage.

**CONTACT: Kristen Ziter, Program Director**

[Kristen.ziter@vermont.gov](mailto:Kristen.ziter@vermont.gov)

# VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM (VTP)

VTP provides performance-based workforce grants for pre-employment training, training for new hires, and training for incumbent workers.

- This training can either be on-site or offered through an outside provider.
- VTP grants may cover up to 50% of the training cost.



# VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM (VTP)

## Eligibility

- **ALL SECTORS ARE ELIGIBLE:** The VTP is open to all sectors of the Vermont economy. Priority is placed on the twelve "[Vermont 2020](#)" CEDS target sectors. Learn more [here](#).
- **TRAINING FOR FTES:** Trainees must be full-time permanent employees working in Vermont
- Grants are offered for pre-employment training (with guaranteed hire post-training), new employee training, and incumbent employees;
- Employers and training providers must show that the use of VTP funds supplement training; efforts, not replace or supplant training efforts;
- Training shall be directly related to the employment responsibilities of the employee;
- VTP funds shall not duplicate other state and/or federal funds for employee training;
- Employee compensation (hourly wage), at the completion of training, must equal or exceed the livable wage as defined by the Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office (JFO). Currently set at \$13.39 per hour; **AND**
- Employees must be offered a minimum of three of the following employee benefits: health insurance (w/ 50% or more of the premium paid by the employer), dental assistance, paid vacation, paid holidays, child care, retirement benefits, other paid time off excluding paid sick days, other extraordinary employee benefits.

# VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM (VTP)

## Turnaround Time for VTP Grants

Goal from Application Submitted to Grant Awarded: 18 business days



During this labor shortage businesses need assistance in not only hiring for vacancies, but also retaining the workforce they have. The Vermont Training Program can assist with the costs of upskilling and training.

# Vermont Training Program (VTP)

## RESOURCES

[Vermont Training Program](#)

More information on the program

CONTACT: John Young

[john.young@vermont.gov](mailto:john.young@vermont.gov)

Director, Workforce Development Programs